

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 AMMAN 4167

DEPARTMENT PASS AID

E.O. 11652:LGDS  
TAGS: PGOV, EAID, JO, US  
SUBJECT: USAID/JORDAN CDSS: EMBASSY COMMENTS

REF: STATE 113621

SUMMARY: MISSION CDSS WAS BASED ON BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RATIONALE, ALTHOUGH THE WASHINGTON REVIEW CONCENTRATED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON THE POLITICAL. FROM A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW, A REDUCTION IN THE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE LEVEL TO DOLS 93 MILLION OR DOLS 75 MILLION WOULD CRITICALLY LESSEN OUR ABILITY TO PERSUADE JORDAN TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME AND TO GIVE IT THE ASSISTANCE IT WOULD NEED TO RESIST THE ARAB REJECTIONIST AND OTHER PRESSURES THAT WOULD DEVELOP AGAINST JORDAN SHOULD IT JOIN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS. FROM AN ECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW, REFTEL OVERSTATES JORDANIAN "PROSPERITY" AND OVERLOOKS A NUMBER OF POINTS MADE IN THE CDSS THAT ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. AS DEPARTMENT WELL AWARE, OVERALL LEVELS OF BOTH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE ARE FOR JORDANIANS BAROMETER OF OUR POLITICAL INTEREST AND RELATIONS; SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS FROM FY79 SUGGESTED FOR FY80  
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AND 81 WOULD BE TAKEN BY JORDANIANS AS CLEAR, ABRUPT SIGNAL OF LESSENERED POLITICAL INTEREST AND SUPPORT, PARTICULARLY GIVEN PAST CONTEXT OF BOTH OUR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO JORDAN. THIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY INAPPROPRIATE IN THE DAYS AND MONTHS AHEAD.

2. MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT IS CLEAR THAT JORDAN WILL HAVE

A UNIQUE AND ESSENTIAL ROLE IN OUR EFFORTS TO SECURE A COMPREHENSIVE MIDDLE EAST PEACE. IF DISCUSSIONS PROCEED AS WE HOPE BETWEEN ISRAEL, EGYPT AND OURSELVES, IT IS LIKELY THAT WE WILL SOONER OR LATER BE ASKING JORDAN TO JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN OPENED UP BY SADAT INITIATIVE. IT IS THUS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CONTINUE TO PROVIDE JORDAN LEVELS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE THAT WILL GIVE US LEVERAGE AND JORDAN CONFIDENCE TO JOIN NEGOTIATIONS, AND S THE ENSURING VERY DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED. FY80 AND 81 LEVELS SUGGESTED REFTEL DO NOT PROVIDE THIS FLEXIBILITY; INDEED, THEY WOULD INDEPENDENT OF THE NEGOTIATING SITUATION RAISE FOR US MAJOR POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH JORDAN AND AT A TIME WHEN WE NEED THE CLOSEST JORDANIAN COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING.

3. ADDITIONALLY, WHEN JORDAN DOES JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS, IT RISKS VERY STRONG ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND MILITARY PRESSURES FROM REJECTIONIST GROUPS AND STATES. WE MUST BE ABLE TO ASSURE THE GOJ THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE TO WITHSTAND SUCH ECONOMIC PRESSURES AS WILL AFFECT ITS DEVELOPMENT OR ITS ECONOMIC WELL-BEING.

4. IN THIS CONTEXT, WE BELIEVE THAT ALL

OR NEARLY ALL SUCH SUPPORT WAS PROVIDED BY SUCH ARAB NATIONS AS SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, LIBYA OR THE GULF PRINCES  
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WHOSE KNOWN CAPACITY TO EXERT NEGATIVE INFLUENCE EXCEEDS BY MANY TIMES WHAT THEY ARE WILLING TO DO IN A POSITIVE SENSE TO ENCOURAGE BROADENED ARAB PARTICIPATION IN THE SADAT INITIATIVE. OUR BUDGET SUPPORT IN A SITUATION WHERE FELLOW ARABS ATTEMPTED TO BRING PRESSURES ON JORDAN WOULD NOT ONLY TAKE ON ADDED ECONOMIC MEANING, BUT WOULD ALSO HAVE A POLITICAL IMPORTANCE WELL BEYOND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO JORDAN'S BUDGET. MOREOVER, IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN MOVING ARAB/ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD IN A MAJOR WAY, CONTINUED SIGNIFICANT U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR JORDAN'S ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ONE OF MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO MAINTENANCE OF ANY PEACE ARRANGEMENTS.

5. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE SALIENT POLITICAL POINTS, WE BELIEVE REFTEL INCLUDES SEVERAL SERIOUS MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE JORDANIAN ECONOMY AND APPEARS TO MISREAD THE CDSS IN THIS RESPECT. IT IMPLIES, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE PURPOSE OF BUDGET SUPPORT IS TO BUILD FOREIGN EXCHANGE HOLDINGS, THAT FURTHER BUDGET SUPPORT IS UNNECESSARY BECAUSE JORDAN COULD SAFELY DRAW DOWN ITS FOREIGN EXCHANGE HOLDINGS, THAT THE JORDANIAN ECONOMY MAY BE OVERHEATED, THAT NON-U.S. BUDGET SUPPORT CAN BE COUNTED ON, AND THAT SHARPLY REDUCED LEVELS OF U.S.

ASSISTANCE WOULD PERMIT CONTINUANCE BY JORDAN OF ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT CURRENT RATES OF PROGRESS. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS ADDRESS THESE QUESTIONS.

6. THE PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC PURPOSE FOR BUDGET SUPPORT TO JORDAN IS NOT TO ELIMINATE A FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONSTRAINT TO JORDANIAN DEVELOPMENT AS IMPLIED IN REFTEL. JORDAN'S CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEM IS BUDGETARY, NOT FOREIGN EXCHANGE. THE CDSS IS SPECIFIC ON THIS POINT (P. 16): "POLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES WHICH IMPACT HEAVILY ON DEFENSE SPENDING MAKE US UNSURE OF THE LIKELIHOOD OF JORDAN ATTAINING BUDGETARY SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. WE WOULD HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT BY 1983 JORDAN COULD MAKE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN THIS DIRECTION."  
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7. JORDAN'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES ARE NOT DIRECTLY TRANSFERABLE INTO BUDGETARY EXPENDITURES. THE CENTRAL BANK MANAGES FOREIGN RESERVES NOT THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE OR THE NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL. GOVERNOR OF THE CENTRAL BANK NABULSI HAS PURPOSELY FOLLOWED A CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN EXCHANGE POLICY FOR REASONS WE AND THE IMF CONSIDER PRUDENT AND VALID:  
H

(A) REMITTANCES FLOWS (DOLS 450 MILLION PER YEAR OFFICIALLY RECORDED) ARE DETERMINED IN PART BY AN OPEN EXCHANGE

POLICY AND AVAILABILITY OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE. SO IS FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND EURODOLLAR CURRENCY BORROWINGS.

(B) SOME FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES ARE UNAVAILABLE BECAUSE THEY ARE REQUIRED TO BACK DINARS CIRCULATING ON THE WEST BANK, ESTIMATED AT ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF TOTAL CURRENCY ISSUE, AND ARE ALSO IN SOME SENSE A HOLDING ACCOUNT FOR SOME LARGE-SCALE GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES, E.G. THE FERTILIZER PROJECT, CERTAIN MILITARY PURCHASES FUNDED BY THIRD STATES.

(C) THE TIGHT GOJ BUDGET IN 1978 HAS FORCED THE GOVERNMENT TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE LOW PRIORITY EXPENDITURES. TO DRAW DOWN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES AT THIS TIME BY INCREASING DEFICIT SPENDING BEYOND PRESENT PRESCRIBED LIMITS AS WASHINGTON SEEMS TO RECOMMEND WOULD SEEM TO BE PUNISHING RATHER THAN ENCOURAGING THIS BUDGETARY DISCIPLINE.  
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LINE AND WOULD BE CONTRARY TO PRESENT CENTRAL BANK POLICY, A PRUDENT POLICY WHICH WE HAVE STRONGLY SUPPORTED.

(D) WITH AN INFLATION RATE OF ABOUT 15 PERCENT PER ANNUM, BOTH MONETARY AND FISCAL POLICIES MUST BE CONSERVATIVE IN A RELATIVELY FREE MARKET ECONOMY SUCH AS JORDAN.

8. INTERNATIONAL RESERVES ARE UP PARTLY DUE TO COMMERCIAL BORROWINGS (ALMOST DOLS 200 MILLION IN 1977), PARTLY DUE TO CONFIDENCE IN THE DINAR (REMITANCES) AND PARTLY DUE TO AN UNEXPECTEDLY HIGH VOLUME OF OFFICIAL TRANSFER FROM ARAB STATES IN 1977. RESERVES NOW COVER ROUGHLY SEVEN MONTHS OF IMPORT REQUIREMENTS, WHICH NEITHER WE NOR THE IMF FIND EXCESSIVE, GIVEN THE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND JORDAN'S RELIANCE ON UNCERTAIN EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE.

9. WE THINK IT IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE IMF, AND THE MISSION IN THE CDSS (PG. 9), BOTH EXPRESS CONCERN THAT THE 1978 BOJ BUDGET MAY NOT BE EXPANSIONARY ENOUGH FOR THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN JORDAN. JORDAN IS NOT PRESENTLY AN OVERHEATED ECONOMY.

10. WHAT HAS PRINCIPALLY KEPT THE 1978 BUDGET TIGHT (7 - 8 PERCENT INCREASE IN GOJ EXPENDITURES OVER 1977) IS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF ARAB BUDGET SUPPORT. THE MISSION HAS TALKED TO NO ONE WHO BELIEVES THE JD 103 MILLION IN OFFICIAL BUDGET SUPPORT PROJECTED IN THE 1978 BUDGET WILL FULLY MATERIALIZE. THIS MEANS MORE REDUCTIONS IN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES WHICH IN TURN MEANS A REDUCTION IN DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES OR MORE CARRYOVER OF OBLIGATIONS INTO FY79. (CARRYOVERS FROM 1977 TO 1978 EQUALLED 20 PERCENT OF DOMESTIC REVENUE). DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS CAN BE DELAYED; SALARIES AND ESSENTIAL RECURRING EXPENDITURES CANNOT. WHAT U.S. BUDGET SUPPORT HAS DONE IS HELP TO INCREASE GOJ EXPENDITURES ON

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DEVELOPMENT. GOVERNMENT CAPITAL EXPENDITURES HAVE INCREASED FROM JD 83.2 MILLION IN 1976 TO AN ESTIMATED JD 160.7 MILLION IN 1978, OR FROM 36 PERCENT OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES IN 1976 TO AN ESTIMATED 43 PERCENT IN 1978 (CDSS PG. 28). MOST OF THIS IS FOR DEVELOPMENT, ONLY ABOUT HALF OF WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE FINANCED FROM FOREIGN LOANS IN 1978.

11. RELATIVE TO THE SUB-CONTINENT AND MANY COUNTRIES IN AFRICA, JORDAN CAN BE CONSIDERED A PROSPERING COUNTRY. HOWEVER, CONTRARY TO ASSERTION IN PARA. 1 REFTEL, IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT (E.G. IN COMPARISON TO ISRAEL AND ITS OIL-PRODUCING NEIGHBORS) JORDAN IS NOT IN THAT CATEGORY. TO THE CREDIT OF JORDAN--A COUNTRY WITH EXTREMELY LIMITED NATURAL RESOURCES EXCEPT HIGHLY MOTIVATED, WELL-EDUCATED PEOPLE--REAL PER CAPITA INCOME GROWTH IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS HAS BEEN REMARKABLE. ALSO TO JORDAN'S CREDIT, SOCIAL EQUITY HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT PRIORITY IN GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS. THE ECONOMY IS GROWING, BUT IT IS PREMATURE AND AN EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THIS HEALTHY GROWTH IS EQUIVALENT TO PRESENT PROSPERITY. JORDAN'S DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORT IS EMERGING AS SOMEWHAT OF A SUCCESS STORY, BUT THE SHORT PERIOD OVER WHICH THIS PROGRESS HAS BEEN REALIZED REQUIRES THE CONFIRMATION OF ITS CONTINUATION. ESPECIALLY SINCE 1975, REMITTANCE INCOME HAS CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO GNP, BUT THIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY HAS LARGELY BEEN IN THE FORM OF IMPORTED CONSUMER GOODS AND REAL ESTATE. ONLY RECENTLY HAVE WE SEEN SIGNS THAT REMITTANCES ARE BEING DRAWN SUBSTANTIALLY INTO PRODUCTIVE LOCAL INVESTMENTS. UNTIL THIS TREND IS CONFIRMED AND INCREASED TO BECOME A PERMANENT PHENOMENON, REMITTANCES CANNOT BE CONSIDERED A MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC GROWTH. FURTHERMORE, REMITTANCES ARE NOT A DEPENDABLE SOURCE OF INCOME TO JORDAN, HEAVILY RELIANT AS THEY ARE ON EVENTS OUTSIDE AS WELL AS INSIDE JORDAN. THE GOJ IS DEVELOPING NEW INSTRUMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS TO CHANNEL REMITTANCE INCOME INTO PRODUCTIVE USES, BUT IT IS TOO EARLY TO EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF THESE EFFORTS. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND POLICY AND A REAL

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RESOURCE BALANCE, GDP RATHER THAN GNP REMAINS THE MORE APPROPRIATE INDICATOR.

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12. THE MISSION AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JORDAN HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM THAT IS VERY RESPONSIVE TO CONGRESSIONAL AND BUREAU GUIDANCE CONCERNING EQUITY AND BASIC HUMAN NEEDS. THE CDSS REFLECTS THIS APPROACH. ELININATING BUDGET SUPPORT, WHICH PROVIDES DTLUOYOBANT PORTION OF THE WHEREWITHAL FOR THE GOJ TO IMPLEMENT THIS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, AND REDUCING THE OVERALL PROGRAM TO DOLS 75 (OR DOLS 93) MILLION, INCLUDING MAQARIN, WOULD CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS SETBACK TO THIS HIGHLY COMMENDABLE DEVELOPMENT EFFORT.

13. THE MISSION AGREES THAT "JORDAN DOES NOT NEED BUDGET SUPPORT FROM THE U.S. TO FUND ITS BUDGET DEFICIT" (PARA. 3 REFTEL)--BUT ONLY IF THIS MEANS IT CURRENT ACCOUNT BUDGET DEFICIT--AS LONG AS THE GOJ AHS ASSURANCES (WHICH IT DOES NOT HAVE) THAT THE ARAB DONORS WILL COME THROUGH WITH BUDGET SUPPORT IN THE RANGE OF DOLS 120 MILLION - 180 MILLION PER YEAR. THE GOJ DOES NEED U.S. BUDGET SUPPORT TO CARRY OUT ITS DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM IN AN UNCERTAIN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE MILITARIES EXTRAORDINARY RECURRING EXPENDITURES MIGHT HAVE TO BE INCREASED AT ANY TIME AND WHERE MERCURIAL AND POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED ARAB DONOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE EITHER MIGHT NOT MATERIALIZE OR BE CUT ABRUPTLY AS IT WAS IN 1970-1971. THE GOJ AND U.DU ARE PROGRAMMING  
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ASSISTANCE IN A HIGHLY UNCERTAIN ENVIORNMENT.

14. THE MISSION HAS BEEN CONSIDERING CAREFULLY POSSIBLE

ALTERNATIVES TO BUDGET SUPPORT, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITIES MENTIONED IN PARA. 4 OF REFTTEL, BUT IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR AT THIS TIME WHICH, IF ANY, ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE POLITICALLY AS EFFECTIVE AS BUDGET SUPPORT, OR MAKE ECONOMIC AND PROGRAMMING SENSE.

15. THE JORDANIANS ARE CERTAINLY SENSITIVE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PROPORTIONALITY AND EVENHANDEDNESS AND UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD WELCOME ENTHUSIASTICALLY THE IDEA THAT OUR PROGRAM SHOULD BE 1/3 LOAN AND 2/3 GRANT TO BE ON PARITY WITH THE 1979 REQUESTS FOR EGYPT AND ISRAEL. (OUR BUDGET REQUEST FOR JORDAN IN FY79, EXCLUDING LOANS FOR MAQARIN AND PL480, IS 38 PERCENT GRANT AND 62 PERCENT LOAN). WHETHER IT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF U.S. TO SUBSTITUTE THIS IDEA FOR BUDGET SUPPORT IS, IN OUR VIEW, WORTH A GREAT DEAL OF CAREFUL STUDY. ADDITIONAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF AND WE BELIEVE SOMEWHAT MISGUIDED OVERFOCUSING ON THE "PRINCIPLE OF PROPORTIONALITY" MAY WELL LEAD THE JORDANIANS TO QUESTION (QUITE RIGHTLY) THE DISPROPORTION (IN PER CAPITA TERMS) BETWEEN THE LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE TO THEMSELVES WITH A POPULATION OF TWO MILLION-ODD AND THEIR ISRAELI NEIGHBOR WITH A POPULATION OF 3 1/2 MILLION MORE OR LESS.

16. IN SUM, THE FY80 AND FY81 LEVELS SUGGESTED REFTTEL FALL SO SHORT OF JORDANIAN NEEDS THAT THEY WOULD CAUSE US MAJOR BILATERAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS AT A TIME WHEN WE WILL BE ASKING JORDAN TO UNDERTAKE SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL RISKS BY JOINING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. U.S. POLICY TOWARD JORDAN HAS BEEN BASED ON SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES OF JORDAN TO ALLOW IT TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY

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AND INDEPENDENCE OF ITS MODERATE POSITION. ON THE WHOLE, THROUGH OUR AND JORDANIAN EFFORTS, JORDAN HAS MADE CONSIDERABLE, STEADY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS. ALTHOUGH IT IS MOVING TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY, IT HAS NOT YET ACHIEVED IT. THE NEXT FEW YEARS ARE CRUCIAL, POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY, AND WE BELIEVE OUR RELATIONS AND OUR POLICY REQUIRE THE MAINTENANCE OF THE LEVELS SET FORTH IN THE CDSS.

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## Message Attributes

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